NCA-08
BACKGROUNDER 5-6308 DECEMBER 9, 1978
SPLANE/MIAMI

MORE CUBANS TO MIAMI

ANNCR: A SECOND GROUP OF FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM CUBA IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN MIAMI, FLORIDA NEXT TUESDAY DEC. 12, AS PART OF A NEW INFLUX THAT MAY REACH THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND. BUT MANY PEOPLE IN MIAMI FEAR THE CITY IS NOT EQUIPPED TO TAKE CARE OF THE NEW ARRIVALS. VOA CORRESPONDENT RUSSELL SPLANE HAS THE DETAILS IN THIS BACKGROUND REPORT FROM MIAMI.

VOICE: U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL GRIFFIN BELL HAS APPROVED U.S. ASYLUM FOR ANOTHER SEVENTY CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONERS AND ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN OF THEIR RELATIVES. THEY ARE TO ARRIVE IN MIAMI IN TWO U.S. CHARTERED JETS. THIS WILL BE THE SECOND SUCH GROUP SINCE OCTOBER THAT'S BEEN APPROVED FOR ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES UNDER A SPECIAL IMMIGRATION STATUS CALLED "PAROLE." PAROLES ARE GRANTED IN HUMANITARIAN CASES, ALLOWING FOR SPEEDY ENTRY INTO THE COUNTRY FOR THOSE WHO OTHERWIDE WOULD FACE UNDUE HARDSHIP. U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE SAID THAT PAROLES WILL BE GRANTED TO THOSE STILL HELD IN CUBAN PRISONS AND THEIR FAMILIES--ABOUT TWELVE TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND PERSONS IN ALL. BUT OFFICIALS SAY THAT FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR VISAS LIKE IMMIGRANTS OF OTHER NATIONALITIES. ACTING DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION RICHARD GULLAGE IN MIAMI EXPLAINS:

TAPE: CUT ONE--GULLAGE

"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WILL AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF PAROLE TO A SPECIFIC NUMBER. BUT IF A PERSON IS ELIGIBLE TO OBTAIN AN IMMIGRANT VISA, HE WILL BE ASKED TO DO SO. WE WOULD PREFER TO HAVE THEM ISSUED A VISA AND MAKE AN ENTRY AS A PERMANENT RESIDENT, RATHER THAN USE A PAROLE SLOT UNNECESSARILY."

VOICE: APPLYING FOR VISA MEANS THE APPLICANTS WILL BE SEEKING SOME OF THE TWO HUNDRED NINETY THOUSAND U.S. VISAS TO BE GRANTED EACH YEAR WORLDWIDE. IT MAY MEAN WAITING FOR YEARS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PRIORITY LIST BY WHICH THE VISAS ARE GRANTED.

INCLUDING THE FORMER CUBAN PRISONERS--THE ONES NOW FREED AND INTEGRATED INTO CUBAN SOCIETY--AND THEIR FAMILIES, THE TOTAL NUMBER FROM CUBA WHO MAY BE SEEKING ENTRY INTO THE UNITED STATES COULD REACH THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND. BUT INTEGRATING THIS NUMBER INTO MIAMI COSTS MONEY, AND OFFICIALS HERE SAY THERE JUST AREN'T ENOUGH DOLLARS. THEY'VE ASKED THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR MORE MONEY, BUT THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT CONGRESS WILL PROVIDE THE FUNDS. A CUBAN REFUGEE PROGRAM WAS SET UP HERE AT THE TIME OF THE FIRST CUBAN AIRLIFT--WHICH BROUGHT TWO HUNDRED SIXTY THOUSAND PEOPLE TO FLORIDA FROM 1965 TO 1973. THE BUDGET OF MORE THAN TWELVE MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR TWO YEARS AGO--IS BEING REDUCED YEARLY AND THE OFFICE IS SCHEDULED TO BE PHASED OUT BY 1983. UNLESS MORE MONEY IS FOUND, IT'S HARD TO SEE HOW THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND MORE PENNILESS CUBAN REFUGEES CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE SOUTH FLORIDA SCENE.

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